

Mr. SANTORUM. I would be happy to yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, because I do not want to speak on the amendment, I ask unanimous consent to use my 5 minutes to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REINVENTING AMERICORPS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I had an opportunity to read in the New York Times this morning that the President has been making speeches around the country and particularly in response to action yesterday by one of our subcommittees of appropriations, because yesterday the National Service Corps was zeroed out by the subcommittee. And the statement that I do not like is referenced to the fact that we are just playing politics when a program like this is zeroed out. I hope I can stand before this body as a person who has criticized the National Service Corps or AmeriCorps with credibility and say that I can be watchful of how the taxpayers' dollars are spent without being accused of playing politics. Most of my colleagues would remember that during the Reagan and Bush years when we controlled the White House and even controlled this body during part of that period of time I was not afraid to find fault with my own Presidents—Republican Presidents—when this was a waste of taxpayers' dollars when it comes to expenditures for defense.

I think I have a consistent record of pointing out boondoggles, whether it be in defense or anything else. And I have raised the same concerns about AmeriCorps based upon the General Accounting Office saying that each position costs \$26,650 and that that is about twice what the administration said that these would cost. And the poor AmeriCorps worker getting \$13,000 out of that \$26,000 for their remuneration so that much of the money is going to administrative overhead and bureaucratic waste. And I do not see, when we are trying to balance a budget, that we can justify a program that is going to have about 50 percent of its costs not going to the people that are supposed to benefit from that program. And so I have pointed out to the President the General Accounting Office statement. I wrote a letter to the President on August 29 of this year, more or less saying reinvent the program or it is going to be eliminated.

I have not heard a response from my letter to the President yet. I hope he will respond. But I have suggested that he needs to keep the costs of the program within what he said it would cost a couple years ago when it was invented, and that most of the benefits of it should go to the people that are doing the work, not to administrative overhead.

And I suggested reinventing it by doing these things. And I will just read from the letter six headlines of longer paragraphs that I have explaining exactly what I mean.

No. 1, limit the enormous overhead in the AmeriCorps program.

No. 2, ensure that the private sector contributes at least 50 percent to the cost of AmeriCorps. This was an important point that the President was making when the program started, that at least \$1 or 50 percent of the total cost would come from the private sector; \$1 of taxpayers' money leverages a dollar of private sector investment. I doubt if we would find fault with the program if it were to do that. Then I also suggested limiting rising program costs by not awarding AmeriCorps grants to Federal agencies. They say that they get match on this—if EPA has a program with an AmeriCorps worker, that whatever the EPA puts in is part of the match. Well, that is the taxpayers' match; that is not a private sector match.

I said funds must be targeted to assist young people in paying for college because some of the money is going to volunteers who will either drop out or not use the money to go to college.

Then I said to increase the bang for education bucks by making sure that the money is used for those who are going to go to higher education.

Finally, I suggested that if the President wants to reinvent the program, to tell us where in the VA budget, VA-HUD appropriations bill the money ought to come from because there is a lot of other money used. As Senator BOND said yesterday, the money was taken from AmeriCorps and put in the community development block grant program.

I am suggesting to the President that he needs to take into consideration—could I have 1 more minute, please?

Mr. SANTORUM. One additional minute.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggested to the President that he, according to this chart, consider the fact that he has 20,000 volunteers of AmeriCorps; and we have got 3.9 million Americans who volunteer. These are young people, volunteers who do not worry about getting paid anything for volunteerism.

A second thing that the President should consider is that for one AmeriCorps worker we can finance 18 low-income people to go to college with a PELL grant. Those are some alternatives that the President ought to think about as he has a news conference today to expose what he says is playing politics with his program.

When I make a suggestion to the President that he reinvent the program according to his own definition of how that program should be financed and operated, I mean reinvent it. Just do what the President of the United States said the program was going to cost and who it was going to benefit or it will be lost. I speak as a person who wants no playing of politics, but as a

person who wants to make sure that the taxpayers' dollars are used well, whether it is in AmeriCorps or whether it is in a defense program.

Mr. NICKLES addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ASHCROFT). Who yields time to the Senator from Oklahoma?

Mr. SANTORUM. I yield 7 minutes to the Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, first I would like to compliment my colleague and friend from Iowa for his work on AmeriCorps. I hope that the American people realize, according to the General Accounting Office, that the cost per beneficiary is \$27,000. The Senator from Iowa has been very diligent in trying to awaken America to this enormously expensive program. It is a new program. I understand it is one of President Clinton's favorite programs, but it is enormously expensive—enormously expensive.

So I compliment my colleague from Iowa for bringing it to the attention of this country, and, hopefully, we can stop wasting taxpayers' money and maybe do a better job either through the student loan program or PELL grants and help lots of people go to school and obtain a college education instead of a few select receiving benefits in the \$20,000-to-\$30,000 category.

#### FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 2488

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the amendment of my friend and colleague from Louisiana, Senator BREAUX. I think if we adopt the so-called Breaux amendment, we are preserving welfare as we know it. President Clinton said we want to end welfare as we know it, and I happen to agree with that line. But if we maintain or if we adopt this maintenance of effort, as Senator BREAUX has proposed—he has two amendments, one at 100 percent and one at 90 percent—if we adopt either of those amendments, we are basically telling the States: "We don't care if you make significant welfare reductions, you have to keep spending the money anyway."

So, there is no incentive to have any reduction of welfare rolls; certainly, if you had the 100-percent maintenance of efforts. "States, no matter what you do, if you have significant reductions, you spend the money anyway." That is kind of like "in your face, big Government, we know best; Washington, DC is going to micromanage these programs anyway. Oh, yeah, we'll give money to a block grant, but if you have real success, you have to spend the money."

I think that is so counter to what we are trying to do that I just hope that our colleagues will not concur with this amendment. This is a very important amendment.

I just look at the State of Wisconsin. Currently, they are saving \$16 million a month in State and Federal spending.